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Letter dated 6 July 2006 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, under the French presidency of the Security Council, a ministerial debate on children and armed conflict will be organized in the Council on Monday, 24 July.

France has prepared the concept paper annexed hereto in order to guide the discussion on that occasion (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jean-Marc **de La Sablière**

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Annex to the letter dated 6 July 2006 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Ministerial meeting of the Security Council on children and armed conflict

24 July 2006

Concept paper

Since the last debate in the Security Council on children and armed conflict in February 2005, there have been important developments: the adoption of Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), the establishment by the Secretary-General of a monitoring and reporting mechanism, the appointment of Ms. Coomaraswamy to the position of Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, and the start of activities by the Security Council Working Group established under resolution 1612. A report prepared by the Chairman of the Security Council Working Group detailing the Group's work since its start will be published before 24 July 2006.

These have been substantial gains. However, they need to be publicized more and to have maximum support from Security Council member States, the United Nations system, regional organizations, the States and other parties concerned, as well as actors in the field, particularly non-governmental organizations. Only if everyone mobilizes and cooperates will we be able to transform these efforts into success. The purpose of the ministerial debate on 24 July therefore is to give political impetus to the dynamic initiated by the Security Council.

The meeting will be presided over by French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy. It will be attended by the Secretary-General. The Council will hear statements by Ms. Coomaraswamy (the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict) and Ms. Veneman (UNICEF Executive Director). Following statements by members of the Security Council, States concerned with the problem will be invited to speak, as will representatives of regional organizations, main actors in development and, lastly, a representative of civil society. Statements will be limited to five minutes. The debate will conclude with the adoption of a presidential statement.

During the debate, speakers should address the following:

- assessment of the ground covered since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1612 and prospects for the future;
- how to support the implementation of the monitoring and reporting mechanism provided for in Security Council resolution 1612, in particular providing political support and the necessary resources;
- how States and other parties concerned can assist the action of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in discharging her mandate;
- evaluation of the action by the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and how to orient its work;

- how to ensure that the issue of development, especially in the health and education sectors, is articulated in Security Council action so that demobilized children are offered the prospect of lasting reintegration;

- how to obtain the optimal involvement of regional organizations and civil society actors in the strategy of the Security Council, in the new context created by Security Council resolution 1612.